CASUAL · CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE · OCTOBER 2026

Video for AI answers and agents.

How ChatGPT, Gemini, Google's AI answers and AI agents find, read and cite company films, and what B2B companies need to do.

1 in 15 citations in Google's AI Overviews goes to YouTube, more than to any other website.

Source: Surfer, about 6.78 million AI Overview citations from its users' tracked prompts, September 2026. Surfer sells SEO software, as do most firms that measure AI citations.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many buyers ask AI before they ask you. Most AI tools cite YouTube near the top.

What the latest research says about how AI answers and agents find, read and cite video, and what our audit of company YouTube channels adds.

45%	of B2B buyers used generative AI in a recent purchase. 69% prefer a rep to check it.
Top 2	YouTube's rank among sites cited by AI Overviews, AI Mode, Gemini and Perplexity.
No. 1	factor linked to brands named in ChatGPT and Google's AI answers: YouTube mentions.
50%	of the YouTube links in Google's AI Overviews go to a moment inside the video.
1 in 9	full-length videos have chapters on the median leading B2B channel we audited.
41%	of the YouTube videos AI cited had under 1,000 views. Small films get cited too.

Every figure is sourced on its own page. Most figures on AI citations come from firms that sell AI-visibility tools; they show links and cannot prove cause, and they move month to month. No independent study yet shows that video causes more AI citations.

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BUYERS ASK AI, AND AI CITES YOUTUBE

Many buyers build shortlists with AI. Four of six AI tools put YouTube in their top two.

B2B BUYERS

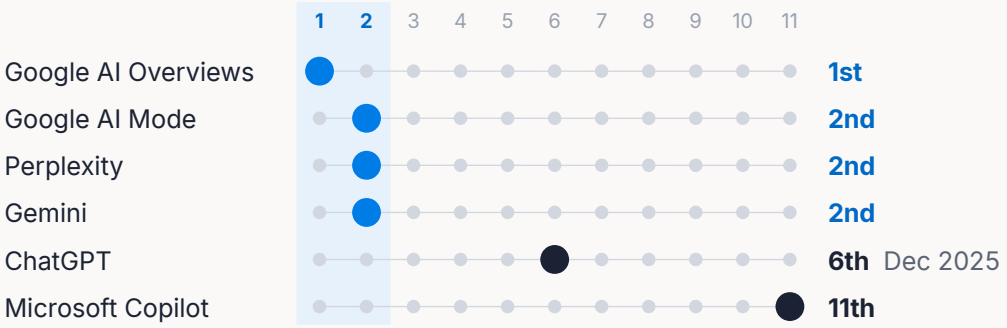
45%

used generative AI in a recent purchase, in Gartner's independent survey.

69%

prefer to check what AI tells them with a sales rep.

YOUTUBE'S RANK AMONG THE WEBSITES EACH AI TOOL CITES



Shares are small: YouTube gets about 1 in 15 AI Overview citations and 1 in 100 in ChatGPT.

> AI helps draft the shortlist and people check it. Your films have to work for both.

Sources: Gartner, 645 B2B buyers, August to September 2025 (published 20 May 2026), independent; Ahrefs Brand Radar, US, 3 million+ queries per AI tool, September 2026, and Ahrefs, December 2025 (ChatGPT); Surfer, September 2026; Profound, October to December 2025. Ahrefs, Surfer and Profound sell SEO or AI-visibility tools.

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HOW AI TAKES IN A FILM

Most AI tools read what a film says. Gemini can also watch it.

GEMINI

Watches

One frame a second, plus the sound. It can open public YouTube links only.

GOOGLE'S AI ANSWERS

Reads the page

The watch page, title, description and chapters. Google's crawler runs your video player.

CHATGPT, CLAUDE, PERPLEXITY

Reads the words

Text and images. Their crawlers did not run JavaScript when last measured, so a video player can look empty.

AI AGENTS

Browses

They read page text or look at screenshots. In one bot-security study, 80% of their activity was on product and search pages.

> For most AI, the transcript is the film.

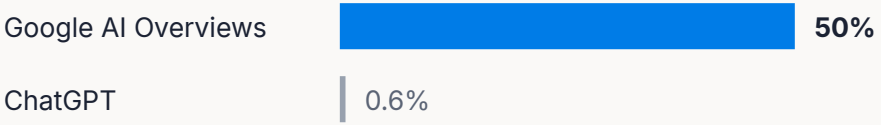
Sources: Google, Gemini API video documentation, October 2026; OpenAI and Anthropic model documentation; Vercel and MERJ, AI crawler study, December 2024; Wistia and Vimeo documentation, August 2026; OpenAI, ChatGPT agent, July 2025; HUMAN Security, August 2026 (vendor).

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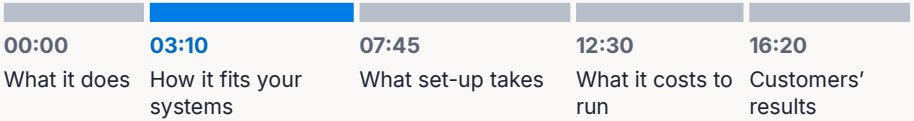
WHAT GETS A FILM CITED

AI mostly cites longer videos, often at a moment. Leading B2B channels go short, with few chapters.

YOUTUBE CITATIONS THAT LINK TO A MOMENT



AN EXAMPLE: ONE 20-MINUTE FILM, FIVE ANSWERS



THE YOUTUBE VIDEOS AI CITES

10 to 20 minutes is the most common length. 94% are full-length.

LEADING B2B CHANNELS, OUR AUDIT

3.2 min is the typical full-length video on the median channel.

1 in 9 full-length videos have chapters on the median channel.

> Chapters turn one film into several answers.

Sources: BrightEdge, nine industries, May to August 2026; OtterlyAI, 100 million+ AI citations, March 2026. Both sell AI-visibility tools. Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, September 2026 (49 leading B2B channels, medians). Two studies side by side; no cause shown. Google has not said how its AI picks the moment.

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WHAT GETS CITED AND TRUSTED

Small films get cited, and other voices count. People decide whether to trust what AI finds.

41%

of the YouTube videos AI cited had under 1,000 views. Small films get cited too.

No. 1

Of the factors Ahrefs tested, YouTube mentions in anyone's videos were most closely linked to a brand being named in ChatGPT, AI Mode and AI Overviews.

82%

of the sources AI cited on whether a product is good were independent. For what it does, half were the company's own.

48% less trust in written content that people suspected was AI-made.

4x as influential with B2B buyers: video from a customer like them, against video from a market leader.

> Google asks for first-hand expertise. Put people who have done the work on camera.

Sources: OtterlyAI, March 2026; Ahrefs, 75,000 brands, December 2025 (a correlation; Ahrefs warns it does not prove cause); Omniscient Digital, January 2026. All three sell AI or SEO services. Raptive, commissioned survey, August 2025; LinkedIn and Bain, LinkedIn x LIONS Advisory deck (vendor); Google Search Central.

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WHAT TO DO

Answer buyers' questions, out loud. Publish twice.

MAKE

01 **Start from buyers' questions.** The ones they put to AI: comparisons, integrations, set-up, cost and results.

02 **One question per chapter.** Full-length films and webinars in clear chapters, each named as its question.

03 **Say it out loud.** Most AI gets only the words: speak names, claims and numbers. Show figures for two seconds or more.

04 **Real people who know.** Customers like your buyer, engineers, implementers, named experts. Let AI script, caption and version.

05 **Keep the facts current.** AI errs most on facts that change: in one study of 1,704 brands, 13.5% of its pricing facts were false.

PUBLISH AND MEASURE

06 **On YouTube.** Public, so Gemini can read it. Captions checked by a person, chapters named as the questions and a full description of what it says.

07 **On your site.** A watch page for each key film, with the full transcript in the page's text and VideoObject and Clip markup. Let AI search crawlers in.

08 **Beyond your site.** In customers', partners' and creators' videos, and on LinkedIn from named people. The same facts everywhere AI looks.

09 **Measure it.** Track the same buyer questions over time. Run each several times; report ranges. Count YouTube citations separately. Compare with similar, untouched questions.

Sources: G2, March 2026; Gemini API documentation; YouTube Help; Searchable, 32,556 AI-stated facts about 1,704 brands, to July 2026 (vendor); Google Search Central; OpenAI, Anthropic and Perplexity crawler documentation; Wistia and Vimeo documentation, August 2026; SparkToro and Gumshoe, January 2026.

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Answer the question. Publish the words.



If you want to see how your channel compares, let me know.

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More of our research: casualfilms.com/research

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